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Hazel B. McKibben

Iowa State College

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My Grandmother's Dresses and Mine

Hazel B. McKibben, Instructor in Education

MANY times Home Economics Club girls, and their teachers as well, say: "Oh, I wish I had a little playette that I could put on for this or that program." Here is one which you may use, if you wish. It is written for high school girls, but could easily be adapted to college use.

Stage Setting—

A living room of the present day, with the following arrangement:

1. Sectional book cases with an appropriate picture above each.
2. Davenport with the old family album open on it and an old Paisley shawl thrown carelessly over it.
3. Davenport table.
4. Coxwell chair and stool.
5. Occasional table and lamp.
6. Floor lamp.
7. Large ferns on stands.

There should be a wrapping paper frame of this nature, which will be large enough to fasten with thumb tacks to the frame of the French doors. On this paper should be a design similar to those found in old albums.

Between Scenes I and II the French doors should be opened clear back and the frame tacked into place.

French doors and window should be curtained according to present day standards.

Characters—

Ethel—school girl in whose home the scene is laid.

Mary, Lois, Jane, Mabel, Doris—friends of Ethel.

Three girls with old-fashioned costumes.

Time—Spring of this year.

Scene—Living room of Ethel's home.

Scene I.

Ethel enters R. (She is just home from school, carrying her books. Her clothes are attractive, but not elaborate—coat and hat of sports type, tailored dress, school shoes, etc. Throws books down and taking off coat and hat, she calls to her mother):

Mother! Oh, Mother! (goes to door L. and looks into other room) Mother! (coming back to davenport and throws coat and hat on the arm.) Oh, I forgot, this is the afternoon the club meets and Mother won't be home for an hour yet. (Noticing the album and shawl.) Well, look what Patsy dragged down from the attic! She certainly does find everything—even my letters!—and reads them, too! I hope she plays over at Helen's until Mother comes home, she bothers me so! (She drops down on davenport and looks at album.) What queer dresses! I wonder if that's the way my

Grandmother dressed when she was a girl? (Turning over pages.) I expect she liked pretty clothes just as well as I do. Ho-hummm, this makes me sleepy. I guess I'll take a little nap before Mother gets home.

Curtain

Scene II.

The French doors are open and the paper frame is up—softer light and a spot on the door when the girls in old-fashioned dresses appear. Ethel is asleep on the davenport and the album has fallen onto the floor. A knock is heard outside, but Ethel sleeps on. Mary and Lois come in. Mary is wearing a school suit and Lois a tailored dress.

Lois—Well, no wonder Ethel did not come to the door—there she is fast asleep!

Mary—The nerve of her! Say—I tell you what let's do.

Lois—What?

Mary—Let's stay right here until she wakes up. We'll teach the young lady to sleep when she has callers!

Lois (grinning)—That would be fun. What shall we do in the meantime?

(Both start looking around.)

Mary—Here is an old family album like we have in our attic. Let's look at the funny old pictures in it.

Lois—That's a good suggestion. Come on over here where we can look at it together.

(They sit, Mary in the Coxwell chair, and then Lois pulls the stool up close to it so they can look on together. Backs are to the French doors.)

Mary (laughing)—Well, now, if that isn't the funniest thing. What is it, anyhow (First model appears at door and walks slowly out a few steps, poses—turns and goes back, slowly. This model wears an old-fashioned suit with a bustle and a little old hat of the same period that sets on top of the head.)

Lois—Why, Willy, that's a suit like our grandmothers wore.

Mary—It certainly is different from mine. Really, now, you would almost think the poor woman was deformed.

Lois—And that hat! It is a good thing she has that ribbon under her chin or the first breeze would sure take it sailing. Anyhow, it's kind of a cute old thing.

Mary—Let's see what's on the next page.

(Turns page.)

(The next model appears in a leg o' mutton sleeve dress—high collar, basque waist and full skirt. She promenades as model one.)

Lois—Such sleeves! I actually believe

I could almost get a skirt out of one of them.

Mary—Yes, they are pretty big, but aren't you glad that we don't have to choke behind high collars like that? And that waist line! (Holding her hands up to show the size, then getting her own and showing the relative position of her hands.) Whew!

Lois—They don't compare, they don't compare, Mary. It's all contrast.

Mary (good naturedly trying to push Lois off her stool)—That's all right, young lady; your athletic figure is a contrast too when you talk about such waist lines as that.

Lois (laughing)—Yes, I suppose so. I wonder what else there is in here.

(A knock is heard at the door. Girls start. Look at each other—hesitate—and Lois goes to the door—opens it.) Oh, hello, girls—be quiet so you won't waken Ethel. (Jane and Mabel enter attired in school clothes.)

Jane—Is she sick?

Mary—No, I don't think so. We just stopped in for a minute on the way home from school and there she was fast asleep.

Mabel (who is carrying a box under her arm)—Oh, dear, and I wanted to show her my new party dress that I got for the Junior-Senior Prom.

Lois—Oh, let's see it, Mabel. I don't have mine yet.

Mabel shows it to the girls. Exclamations of "Oh, how sweet!" "Isn't that adorable!" "Just darling!" etc.

Mary—I tell you what, Lois and I have been looking through this old album thinking that Ethel may waken soon, so you girls stay, too, and then you can show her your dress, Mabel.

Mabel—That suits me, all right. (Leaves dress out over the occasional table.)

Jane—Oh, that would be fun—I vote for the affirmative. (Mabel and Jane sit on the arms of the chair. Lois resumes her seat on the stool.)

Mary—Here is the next one. Oh! how perfectly adorable! (Model III enters wearing a hoop skirt dress, short sleeves, low neck, mitts, poke bonnet, pantalettes show beneath the skirt—A dainty, colorful costume.)

Mabel—Isn't she sweet? Why, that is almost nicer than mine.

Lois—Wouldn't people have been shocked if girls like this one would have worn party dresses like we have now? Long skirts and pantalettes so the ankles don't show, and ours—

Jane—How could those girls sit in such

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cept for a gas light here and there. Shutters were drawn down over all the shop windows and it was so quiet that the horses' footsteps echoed throughout the streets. We drove past the old ruins of the Forum, which are in a valley between the Palatine and the Quirinal hills. Then we passed the Colosseum, which almost frightens one with its grandeur in the evening. Next, we passed the Forum of Trojan, which has been excavated, and which now contains at least forty cats, thrown in by the people of Rome. For food, these cats depend on donations from passersby.

On our way home we again saw the immense ruins of the Baths of Diocletian. These baths could accommodate 10,000 people bathing at the same time. There were rooms for hot and cold showers, reading rooms, conversation rooms, theater rooms, recreation rooms, and the emperor's apartments. There were manicurists, pedicurists and many kinds of beauty specialists to wait on the bathers. The emperors were very fond of baths, some of them taking as many as four a day, and sometimes taking their meals during their baths.

Late that night we reached our apartment, which was outside the old walls of Rome. Near it there were some catacombs. Some people thought that there might have been catacombs under our house, because the Christians had made such an underground network of them all over Rome.

Every day brought new experiences, new sights and new friends, so that nine months slipped away like nine weeks and it seemed to me that I had just begun to really appreciate the wonders of the Ancient Empire, the Medieval Kingdom, and modern Italy with Mussolini as the dictator, when it was time to take a home bound boat from Naples to New York.

Flowers—and How

(Continued from page 2)

one, for it gave plenty of beauty and plenty to eat. If more vegetables are wanted, two rows may be planted to one of flowers. It is best, too, to grow annuals instead of perennials so the garden can be cultivated each year.

Zoroaster was right when he said, "He who sows the ground with care and diligence, acquires a greater stock of religious meat than he could grow by the repetition of ten thousand prayers."

Grandmother's Dresses and Mine

(Continued from page 4)

great big skirts? Personally, I prefer a little more freedom and brevity.

Mabel—Freedom? Her finger tips, at least, are free.

Mary—Oh, you're too clever, Mabel! I expect that girl was thrilled to pieces over— (Insistent knocking.)

Lois (jumping up and running to the door)—Oh, dear, dear—Ethel will be sure to waken—(opens door)—Keep still, Doris, Ethel is asleep.

Doris (rushes in—school girl costume)—Oh, Gee! I'm glad to find you all here. Come on downtown with me. I'm going to get my new Prom dress tonight.

Mary—Will we go? I'll say so. Come on, girls.

(Mabel picks up her dress and box and they all rush out except Lois, who fixes the room as it was when they came in.)

Lois—Wait a minute (as she goes out the door).

Curtain

Scene III.

Ethel is still asleep on the davenport. The frame is gone and the doors are back in their normal positions. Ethel wakens—sits up, rubs her eyes and speaks)—"Have I been dreaming or was there someone actually here—people with funny old clothes. (Looks down at the album and picks it up.) Why, there is a picture of the girl with the adorable old hoop skirt and poke bonnet. Oh, but she is sweet. (Steps outside.) Oh, my goodness, there comes Mother and I have not done a thing for dinner, but I did have a good dream, anyhow."

Exit.

Curtain

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